



**Series: God's Word Across Time**  
**Lesson: Session 6—Nicaea & Athanasius**

**Nicaea (325)**

- First ecumenical council
- Arians blow it by denying deity of Christ
- The need to finally answer how Jesus is God in a monotheistic system
- The Nicene Creed
  - Ομοουσιος [*homoousios*] not ομοιουσιος [*homoiousios*]!
  - Inventing language to express biblical truth
  - Mystery better than heresy

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, **of one substance** with the Father, through Whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, Who because of us humans and because of our salvation came down and became incarnate, becoming human, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead; And in the Holy Spirit.

○ How do we view councils?

- Athanasius defends the orthodox definition
  - Refusing to compromise theologically for the sake of ecclesiastical unity
  - Introduces  $\upsilon\pi\omicron\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$  [*hypostasis*] to help explain Trinity
  - Understood necessity for Jesus to be fully man and fully God, but in a way that was a bit skewed

## Athanasius

- Aftermath of Nicaea
  - Confusion brought about by language
  - Changing and conflicting doctrinal positions
  - Weaknesses of Nicene Creed